



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/820,431	04/07/2004	R. Jeffrey Jordan	IGT1P327/AC055	7182

22434 7590 05/08/2007
BEYER WEAVER LLP
P.O. BOX 70250
OAKLAND, CA 94612-0250

EXAMINER

HOEL, MATTHEW D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3714

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
-----------	---------------

05/08/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/820,431	Applicant(s) JORDAN ET AL.	
	Examiner Matthew D. Hoel	Art Unit 3714	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 January 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 10-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 10-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

1. Claims 1 to 3, 6 to 14, 16 to 21, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Burns, et al. (U.S. pre-grant publication 2002/0034977 A1, application 09/541,180).
2. As to Claim 1: '977 teaches a service center coupled to a gaming network and to an automatic teller network (Fig. 1). '977 has a player identifier structured to validate a user as a holder of a player account on the gaming network (cash-out slips that maintain an account of the player's winnings, Abst.). '977 has a ticket reader (bar code reader 304, Fig. 1; cash-out slips with bar codes, Figs. 2-4). '977 has a verifier coupled to the player identifier and the ticket reader, and structured to validate a ticket that is inserted into the ticket reader (validity of coupons verified, Para. 15). '977 has a payment dispenser structured to eject an amount of value after the ticket is validated (automatic currency dispenser, Para. 20). Regarding the new limitation, '977 teaches validating a ticket of an authorized holder (player tracking enabled by insertion of room key or card or player identification card, player subsequently tracked when slip cashed out as slip is tied to player, Para. 19).

Art Unit: 3714

3. As to Claim 2: '977 teaches a bill validator (paper currency reader 204, Para. 39).
4. As to Claim 3: '977 teaches a ticket printer (bar code printer 208, Fig. 1).
5. As to Claim 10: '977 teaches a standalone service center that is coupled to a gaming network (Fig. 1). '977 presents transaction choices to a user and accepts a selected choice (Figs. 5a,b). '977 verifies an identity of a user having a player account (player identification card, Para. 47). '977 accepts a ticket at a ticket reader (Para. 51). '977 validates the accepted ticket by comparing it to data stored on the gaming network (validity of cash-out slips verified by CPU, Para. 49). The attendant then provides a benefit to the user by paying out on the cash-out slip (Para. 49). Regarding the new limitation, the cashout slips can be redeemed at a cashier's station which does not include a gaming machine (Abst., Para. 51).
6. As to Claim 11: '977 provides winnings in currency (Para. 51).
7. As to Claim 12: The service center of '977 is structured to provide a benefit to the user by providing a new ticket to the user (pre-printed free play coupons, Para. 13).
8. As to Claim 13: The service center of '977 is structured to provide a benefit to the user by adding a benefit to the player account (player receives credit for game play corresponding to amount in account, Para. 12; pre-printed free play coupons represent value redeemable in free plays credited to player's account, Para. 13).
9. As to Claim 14: The service center of '977 is structured to establish a data connection with an ATM network (Para. 20 mentions coupons being dispensed by ATMs as opposed to the cashier station).

10. As to Claim 16: '977 teaches a method of servicing a player account, comprising accepting an input at a station that is coupled to a gaming network (Fig. 1), identifying a player having an account based on the input (Para. 19), accepting a ticket at a ticket reader (bar code reader at change station, Para. 50), verifying the authenticity of the ticket (Para. 51), providing something of value to the player (Para. 51), and recording that the ticket has been redeemed (complete accounting of player accounts, Para. 19). Regarding the new limitation, '977 teaches validating a ticket of an authorized holder (player tracking enabled by insertion of room key or card or player identification card, player subsequently tracked when slip cashed out as slip is tied to player, Para. 19).
11. As to Claim 17: '977 is able to add value to a player account (Para. 20).
12. As to Claim 18: The cashier station of '977 is able to eject winnings in the form of currency (Para. 20).
13. As to Claim 19: '977 is able to provide something of value by printing another ticket from the station (pre-printed free play coupons, Para. 13).
14. As to Claim 20: The station of '977 is not a gaming device (300, Fig. 1).
15. As to Claim 21: '977 teaches a method of servicing a player account at a service center coupled to a gaming network on which a plurality of player accounts are stored (Fig. 1, Abst.). '977 establishes a data connection to the gaming network (printouts controlled by central CPU, Para. 13-15). '977 accepts an identification of a user (player identification card, Para. 47). '977 authorizes the user when the information matches the stored user data (Para. 47). '977 accepts a ticket from a user (Para. 20). '977 compares the data from the ticket to ticket data stored on the gaming network (cashier

Art Unit: 3714

station controlled by central CPU, Para. 20). '977 provides something of value if the data from the ticket matches the stored ticket data (Para. 20).

16. As to Claim 24: '977 provides currency to an authorized employee (Para. 51) and stores a record of providing the currency on the gaming network (complete accounting of player accounts, Para. 19).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

17. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

18. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

19. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '977 in view of Bell, et al. (U.S. patent 5,505,461 A).

20. As to Claim 4: '977 discloses all of the elements of Claim 4, but lacks specificity as to printing a tax form. '461, however, teaches printing a tax form when a player cashes out his or her winnings (Abst., Fig. 2). It would be obvious to one of ordinary

Art Unit: 3714

skill in the art to apply the tax form of '461 to the gaming network of '977. It is widely known in the art that casinos retain the Social Security numbers of their patrons to report their winnings to the IRS, as well as to monitor transactions for possible money laundering. The advantage of this combination would be to automate the printing of the tax forms to make the tax reporting more efficient for the casino as well as the winners.

21. Claims 5 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '977.

22. As to Claims 5 and 23: '977 discloses all of the elements of Claims 5 and 23, but does not disclose the player identifier being structured to validate the user as an employee. '977 does teach a player identification card to validate the user as a game player (Para. 47). '977 also has a change station operated by an attendant who dispenses winnings to the winner once the winner has been verified (Para. 51). It would be prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have the player identifier of '977 structured to validate the user as an employee in order to prevent game players or unauthorized employees from gaining access to the change station. This could be done by issuing employees their own employee identification cards, which would otherwise be identical to player identification cards except for the codes stored on them. The advantage of this modification would be to enhance casino security.

23. Claims 15 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over '977 in view of Gatto, et al. (U.S. pre-grant publication 2003/0078094 A1, application 10/052,893).

24. As to Claim 15: '977 discloses all of the elements of Claim 15, but lacks specificity as to transferring account value from an account on the ATM network to the player account. '094, however, teaches transferring credit from an ATM account to make money available for a player to use (Para. 41). The player is able to take the ticket printed by the ATM and use it for subsequent play on the gaming machines. It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to apply the balance transfer of '094 to the gaming network of '977. '977 teaches a gaming network connected to an ATM network (Fig. 1). '977 teaches a cashier station, which can take the form of an ATM, dispensing winnings in cash or coupons (Para. 20). While '977 does not explicitly teach transferring credit from an ATM account to be used for gaming purposes, it would be obvious to do so. The gaming machines of '977 can accept cash (Para. 39). The advantage of this combination is that ATMs would increase the availability of cash, enabling casino patrons to bet more money at the casino.

25. As to Claim 22: '094 teaches establishing a data connection to an ATM network, and transferring money from an account on the ATM network to the player account of the authorized user (Para. 41). '977 transfers money directly to the player's account as the money is printed onto coupons usable at the slot machines (Para. 49). These are tied directly to the player's identity (player tracking enabled by insertion of room key or

Art Unit: 3714

card or player identification card, player subsequently tracked when slip cashed out as slip is tied to player, Para. 19).

Response to Arguments

26. Applicant's arguments filed 1-29-2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The summary is entered as the examiner found no new matter. The applicants state on Page 10 of their remarks that Gatto does not transfer value directly from an account on an ATM network to a player's account. The examiner finds support for this newly claimed limitation in Burns ('977), the base reference. In '977, the player can opt in to the player tracking system by presenting a room card or key or an identification card; the cash-out slips are subsequently tied to that player's identity if the player opts in (Para. 19). The ATM network dispenses coupons usable at the slot machines instead of cash (Para. 49). This value is transferred to the cashout slips that are redeemed in the event that the player wins on the slot machines (Para. 49). Each cashout slip is uniquely identified (Para. 45). The claim language does not require the value to be transferred to an online account. If the value is transferred to slips that are identified and tracked in the player's name, that value has been transferred to a player's account. The applicants state on Page 10 that Burns ('977) does not require the bearer of the cashout slip to be an authorized holder to be an authorized holder *prior to* paying the user the value of the cash slip. In '977 the cashing out of the slip is not predicated on the identification of the player, only identification of the cashout slip (Para. 45). The players are identified and authorized at the beginning of game play if they choose to

Art Unit: 3714

participate in player tracking (Para. 19); the cashout slips are subsequently associated with the players' identities throughout game play(accepting an identification of a user, comparing information from the identification to user data stored on the gaming network, authorizing the user when the information matches the stored user data.) The identity of the player is not verified before cashing out the cashout slips as they are bearer instruments, Para. 45 (accepting a ticket from a user, comparing data from the ticket to ticket data stored on the gaming network, and providing something of value to the user if the data from the ticket matches the stored ticket data). Claim 21's language does not require verifying the user's identity at the end of game player when the player is cashing the ticket. The user ID is compared to user ID stored on the network, and ticket data is compared to ticket data on the network. The claim does not cite comparing user ID data to ticket data, which appears to be what the applicants are alluding to. If the claim were amended to cite this, the examiner believes it would be within the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art to modify '977 such that the player's identification is verified again when the player redeems the cashout slips, to prevent players not involved in the player tracking club from redeeming cashout slips lost by or stolen from tracking club members. The examiner respectfully disagrees with the applicants as to the claims' condition for allowance.

Conclusion

27. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP

Art Unit: 3714

§ 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

28. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.


29. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew D. Hoel whose telephone number is (571) 272-5961. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. to Fri., 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

30. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert E. Pezzuto can be reached on (571) 272-6996. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3714

31. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Matthew D. Hoel
Patent Examiner
AU 3714



Robert E. Pezzuto
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3714